



U.S. Department of Justice  
United States Attorney  
District of Kansas

## NEWS RELEASE

Eric Melgren, U.S. Attorney

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**Contact: Kena Rice**

(316) 269-6481

**Headquarters**

1200 Epic Center  
301 N. Main  
Wichita, Kansas 67202  
(316)269-6481  
FAX (316)269-6484

**Topeka Office**

444 Quincy  
Topeka, Kansas 66683

**Kansas City Office**

500 State Avenue  
Suite 360  
Kansas City, Kansas  
66101

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April 1, 2004

## KANSAS CITY, KANSAS, MAN SENTENCED ON DRUG AND GUN CHARGES

KANSAS CITY, Kan. -- United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced that **John R. Tidwell**, 29, Kansas City, Kansas, was sentenced on March 29, 2004, by U.S. District Judge Kathryn H. Vratil to **20 years and 8 months in federal prison, without parole, to be followed by four years of supervised release.**

Melgren said that Tidwell entered a guilty plea on January 5, 2004, to one count of conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute methamphetamine; one count of possession with the intent to distribute methamphetamine; one count of possessing a handgun in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime; one count of maintaining a residence for the purpose of distributing methamphetamine; and one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Melgren stated that Tidwell admitted at his plea that on July 3, 2003, law enforcement officers executed a search warrant at his residence on South 55<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, Kansas, and found 42 grams (1.53 ounces) of methamphetamine, a loaded handgun hidden in the couch in the living room, a handgun hidden in the attic, ammunition and drug paraphernalia. Tidwell further admitted that his primary source of income was selling drugs. Tidwell further admitted that he had previously been convicted of a felony, aggravated battery, in 1997 in Wyandotte County, Kansas, and he knew it was unlawful for him to own or possess firearms and ammunition.

Co-defendant **Johnathan C.F. Ellis**, 25, Kansas City, Kansas, entered a guilty plea on January 12, 2004, to one count of maintaining a residence for distributing methamphetamine. Ellis faces a maximum of twenty years in federal prison without parole. Sentencing is set for April 12, 2004, at 9:30 a.m.

Melgren commended the excellent work of the Kansas City, Kansas, Police Department and the Kansas Bureau of Investigation in this investigation and Assistant U.S. Attorney Terra Morehead in this prosecution.